

REMARKS

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the careful consideration given the present application. The application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office action, and the following remarks are presented for the Examiner's consideration.

Applicants note, with appreciation the identification of claim 2 as allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the claim from which it depends. However, in light of the remarks below applicants respectfully submit that claim 2 is allowable as filed.

With regard to the rejection of claim 12 under the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. §112 as containing subject matter which was not sufficiently described in the specification, applicants respectfully submit that the loads on the respective diaphragms as claimed in claim 12 are sufficiently supported in the specification. Please note that the loads referred to in the specification and illustrated in Figure 16 as 2.5N and 1.6N are the loads required to press the 5-direction key in the center and in one of the upper, lower, right and left portions, respectively. This is clear not only from Figure 16, but also from the paragraph starting on page 20, line 17. In that paragraph it is explained that due to this configuration, "the pushing sensation experienced when the center pusher portion is pressed can be made different from that experienced when one of the upper, lower, right, and left pusher portions is pressed." The letter "N" is a commonly accepted representation of any integer, and in this case is merely multiplied by either 2.5 or 1.6 depending on the portion of the 5-direction key to be pressed. Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that claim 12 is sufficiently supported in the specification.

Claims 1 and 3-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over

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Reply to Office action of April 9, 2003

Japanese Patent Application No. JP 10-329174 to Suzuki et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,959,863 to Hoyt et al. Applicant submits that Suzuki is available as prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) only through 35 U.S.C. 102(a). Further, Applicant submits that the priority date of the present application, October 1, 1999, is prior to the June 6, 2000 publication date of Suzuki for purposes of 35 U.S.C. 102(a). Thus, enclosed herewith are verified translations of the priority documents, JP 11-281740 and JP 11-281741. Therefore, since the subject matter of claims 1 and 3-16 was invented prior to June 6, 2000, the Suzuki reference is not available as prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102 and 103.

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in a condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No. 33632.

Respectfully submitted,

PEARNE & GORDON LLP

By:



Aaron A. Fishman, Reg. No. 44682

526 Superior Avenue, East
Suite 1200
Cleveland, Ohio 44114-1484
(216) 579-1700

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